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ABSTRACT

Sport and athletic environments provide evidence that the characteristics of the situation in which a leader is found are closely linked to the degree of success that the leader will enjoy. Four situational or "contingency" theories attempt to delineate the relationship between leadership style and effective results: (1) Fiedler's Contingency Model explored whether very lenient leaders (in evaluating their associates) are more or less likely to lead an effective, high-producing group than leaders who are highly demanding. Discriminating leader attitude was associated with high group performance when the situation was either highly favorable or unfavorable; (2) House's Path-Goal theory of leadership describes how leaders affect the path-goal perceptions of subordinates and emphasizes subordinate motivation and satisfaction as the basis for successful leadership; (3) In Vroom and Yetton's Prescriptive Model, effective problem solving and decision-making skills on the part of the leader are seen as essential; and (4) Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory examines the relationship between the level of maturity of followers and effective leadership styles. (JD)

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Leadership is Everybody's Business: Insights Into Sport Situations

by

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Leadership Is Everybody's Business: Insights Into Sport Situations

Robert L. Boucher, Ph.D.
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> "Do skill and genius still matter? Can we distinguish *leaders* from mere power holders? Can we identify forces that enable leaders to act on the basis of common, non-culture-bound needs and values that, in turn, empower leaders to demonstrate genuine moral leadership? Can we deal with these questions across polities and across time? Can we, therefore, apply these concepts of leadership to wider theories of social change and historical causation?

The preceding quotation from James MacGregor Burns' Pulitzer Prize winning work "Leadership", cogently identifies some of the fundamental questions that have been posed throughout the centuries as man has attempted to understand this somewhat nebulous phenomenon. Leadership has a certain aura of magic and glamour which has made it a fascinating topic of philosophical treatises, empirical investigations and even dinner conversations. The question of how to get people to cooperate on a common task for the purpose of achieving a shared goal has always been a major problem for mankind. Concern with this question has mounted as the complexity of tasks in our modern world has increased to the point where relatively few jobs can be accomplished by an individual working alone.

Consistent with the unclear nature of the term "leadership" are the many and varied definitions of the word that are found in the literature of academic disciplines such as psychology, sociology, education, management science, in addition to many lay terms. Although there may be disagreement as to what leadership actually <u>is</u>, there is virtual consensus of what it <u>isn't</u>. The assumption that leadership and organizational position are interchangeable has been established as one of the most common fallacies related to this area of study. We have

known for a long time that executives are not always leaders and real leaders are not always executives (Leslie, 1977; Schriesheim, 1978; and Denmark, 1977). Similarly, viewing leadership as authority, power, or inducing compliance of others has lost its appeal in light of current research. Bookwalter (1969), points out that leadership is not the act of domination but is the art of influencing human behavior. Thus, leadership is currently viewed as an interactive process between the individual and the characteristics of a given situation - each affecting the other. In this transactional view, leadership is seen as a reciprocal process of social influence. Leaders both influence and are influenced by their followers.

However defined, leadership and the study of its various components is currently a topic of special attention by researchers in sport and athletic environments. In the broad area of sport administration the leader behavior of physical education department chairman has been investigated to varying degrees by Dannehl (1970), Lowry (1972), Carlson (1973), D. Buckewicz (1974), Waldenberger (1975), Milner (1976), and Kemp (1977). Athletic directors have also been used for leader samples and have been the subjects of studies by Austin (1973), Morris (1973), Dennis (1973), F. Buckewicz (1974), Pruitt (1976), and Toms (1978). If one accepts Sage's (1975) proposition that a coach is really a "manager" of sorts, then the literature related to coaching can be considered to be closely allied to the administrative area. Recent studies that have used the coach in a leadership role are VanderVelden (1971), Danielson (1974), Inciong (1974), Wardell (1977), Gravelle (1978), Case (1980), McMillan (1980), and Chelladurai and Saleh (1980).

In addition to efforts to understand leadership from an administrative perspective, sport-related environments have proved to be ideal settings

for the emergence of leadership in group settings. The conditions under which sport and athletic teams participate appropriately simulates leader-follower relationship in broader contexts. Among studies that have focused on the player in a potential leadership role are Anspaugh (1971), Kjeldsen (1976), Mason (1976) and Tropp (1978).

The Evolution of Leadership Theory

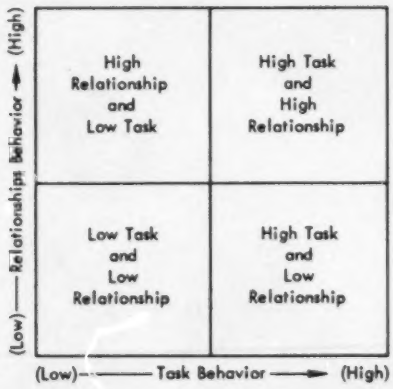
Leadership has been approached from various perspectives throughout the years. Such aspects as traits, situations, personalities, behaviors and styles are representative of the different theories of leadership. During the time in which leadership has been studied, four different yet not entirely incompatible approaches have emerged.

The earliest attempts to explain leadership could be collectively referred to as the "great man theory". The underlying assumption on which this early work was based was that the progress of mankind was dependent upon the individual achievements of great men (Chelladurai and Carron, 1978). It was postulated that if the leader is endowed with superior qualities that differentiated him from his followers, it should be possible to identify these qualities. However, efforts to identify a universal set of traits (physical and/or socio-personal) that characterized a leader, proved inconclusive.

With a growing dissatisfaction with the trait approach of explaining leadership, it became necessary to look in other directions. Several theorists of this time advanced the view that the emergence of a great leader was the result of time, place and circumstance (Bogardus, 1918; Schneider, 1937). Although this theoretical approach in itself was not conclusive in explaining the leadership phenomena, it marked the first recognition of environmental factors as being instrumental to successful leadership.

Influenced by trends in psychology, particularly behaviorism and operant conditioning, researchers shifted their focus to the behavior of the leader, i.e. "the kinds of activities that the leader engages in when fulfilling a leadership role" (Chelladurai and Carron, 1978). The two most prominent projects of this time were the Ohio State Studies and the University of Michigan Studies (Bowers and Seashore, 1966). This research attempted to determine what behavior the leader exhibited when directing the activities of the group toward a common goal. From the Ohio State studies, two distinct dimensions of leadership were identified that provided the basis for the famous Ohio State quadrants of leadership style (Hemphill and Coons, 1957). See Figure 1.

Figure 1 The Ohio State Leadership Quadrants


High Relationship and Low Task
High Task and High Relationship
Low Task and Low Relationship
High Task and Low Relationship
(Low) Relationships Behavior (High)
(Low) Task Behavior (High)

Although leadership theory has progressed beyond the conceptual logic of the Ohio State and University of Michigan projects their worth has proved invaluable. The major contribution of the projects was in defining and describing the behavior and roles displayed by leaders (Chelladurai and Carron, 1978). The instruments that were generated from the studies are still in use today in fact or modified form.

Situational Theories

The behavioral approach to the study of leadership eventually led researchers to attempt to relate actions taken by the leader to the group or situational context within which the leader operated. More recently the direction of research in leadership has followed Stogdill's observation that "an adequate analysis of leadership involves not only the study of leaders but also situations" (1948, p. 65). In 1964, Burke advocated a comprehensive approach based on the assumption that leadership was a function of three interacting yet delineable factors:

1. The leader and his psychological attributes
2. The follower with his problems
3. The "group" situation

As a result of these initial efforts researchers have turned their attention to the interaction between leaders and the many variables within their work situations which influence their effectiveness. Situational leadership research attempts, therefore, not to identify universal leader characteristics, but instead is directed towards discovering situational variables which cause or permit leader behaviors and characteristics to be effective (Filley, et al., 1976).

Viewed collectively the studies subscribing to the situational approach offer rather compelling evidence that it is more realistic than the trait and behavioral approaches previously mentioned (Filley, et al., 1976). Even though it is more realistic, the situational approach does not, however, add very much to the knowledge about leadership unless the specific characteristics of the situation are specified and the functional relationships between the situational variables and the leadership traits and behaviors are also specified. Vroom and Yetton (1973) caution that it is time for behavioral scientists

to move behond generalizing that leadership depends upon the situation and come to grips with the complexities of the phenomenon with which they intend to deal.

Sport and athletic environments provide convincing evidence that the characteristics of the situation in which a leader is found are closely linked to the degree of success that leader will enjoy. Contemporary magazines and newspapers abound with stories of individuals who have been eminently successful in leadership roles in one environment, only to relocate and be considered a failure in another environment. Straub (1978), cites the case of Forrest Gregg, a football coach, who became the Associated Press' Coach of the Year, only to be fired less than twelve months later. The coaching records of Don Cherry, Ned Harkness, Billy Martin, Sparky Anderson and Dan Devine also serve as strong evidence that effectiveness is significantly influenced by a host of conditions and circumstances.

The remainder of this section will deal with four situational theories that have attempted to deal with these complexities. They are sometimes referred to as "contingency theories" because each contains a number of factors that moderate the relationship between two other variables. The four theories that are presented are relevant to sport and athletic environments in that they all propose prescriptions for making leaders more effective.

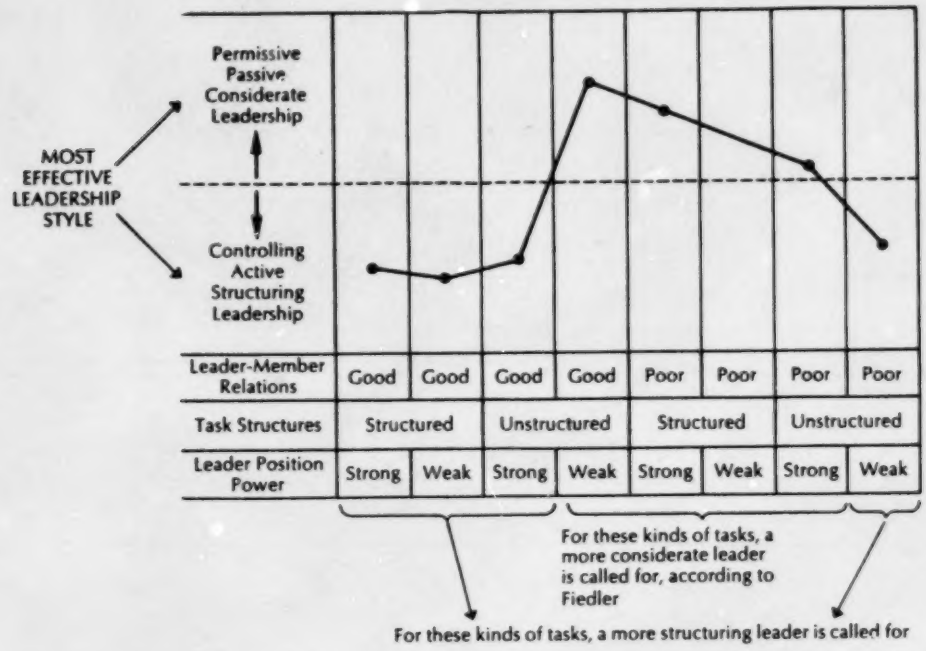
Fiedler's Contingency Model. The first situational theory to be advanced was the "Contingency Model of Leader Effectiveness" developed by Fred E. Fiedler and his associates at the University of Illinois and the University of Washington. In the early 1950's Fiedler began research on the relationship between organizational performance and leader attitudes. More specifically, he sought to determine whether

very lenient leaders (in evaluating their associates) are more or less likely to lead an effective, high-producing group than leaders who are highly demanding and discriminating during the evaluation process. An instrument to identify the Least Preferred Coworker (LPC) in a group was developed which measures the degree to which leaders see even a poor coworker in a relatively favorable manner (Fiedler, 1967). Fiedler argued that the LPC was therefore a measure of a leader's leniency, or an inverse measure of the degree to which they discriminate when evaluating others. The original hypothesis of the studies conducted between 1950 and 1965 was that high LPC scores would be associated with effective group performance. However, the first several years of research yielded mixed results, some of which were in obvious conflict. To explain these results Fiedler hypothesized that the type of leader attitude required for effective group performance depends upon the degree to which the group situation is favorable or unfavorable to the leader. Thus, the situational components of favorableness were identified as:

1. The leader's personal relationship with members of the group
2. The formal power or authority which the leader position provides
3. The degree of structure in the task which the group will perform (Fiedler and Chemers, 1974, p. 69)

Taking these situational factors into consideration from the numerous studies that had been done, Fiedler found that discriminating leader attitude is associated with high group performance when the situation is either highly favorable or unfavorable. However, when the situation is moderately favorable or moderately unfavorable, a more lenient or permissive and considerate attitude is associated with high group performance. See Figure 2 for an overview of the model.

Figure 2 Summary of Fiedler's Theory



Source: Adapted from Fred Fiedler, A Theory of Leadership Effectiveness New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967 p. 176.

Fiedler's contingency model is not without its critics. Graen et al. (1973) and Ashour (1972), for example, have argued that the data and statistical tests used are inappropriate and not valid. The major criticism concerning the evidence for the theory is that the sample sizes employed for any given test of the theory were unusually small and the resultant differences were often statistically insignificant. However, a relatively recent experiment that was well controlled using a large sample and the appropriate statistical tests provided strong support for the predictions of the theory (Chemers and Skrzypek, 1972).

There have been other criticisms of Fiedler's model from a conceptual standpoint and concerning the implications of applying the

model. The usefulness of the theory appears to be that it attempts to explain the contingent relationship of three components of the situation. This recognition of the dynamic, multidimensional nature of leadership has done much to facilitate research in this direction.

Of all of the contingency theories of leadership, Fiedler's has been the most researched in sport and athletic environments. In fact, the original model developed by Fiedler in 1954 used basketball teams as the group under investigation. The results of the research to date does not offer a clear picture as to the usefulness of the contingency model. Studies that have failed to support the theory have been done by Coen (1970), Inciong (1974), Danielson (1976), VanderVelden (1971), and Jackson (1977). Researchers that have been able to show partial support for the theory include Waldenberger (1975), Kjeldsen (1976), Wardell (1977) and Gravelle (1978). In contrast to these findings, a 1976 study by Musselman using athletic convenors of major high school sports offerred full support of Fiedler's model.

House's Path-Goal Theory. This theory provides an obvious contrast to Fiedler's Contingency Model. Whereas Fiedler's focus is on the leader's motivational orientation and the situation's favorableness, the emphasis of Path-Goal Theory is on the needs and goals of the subordinate (Chelladurai and Carron, 1978). The theory purports to describe how leaders affect the path-goal perceptions and satisfaction of subordinates and has its roots in expectancy theory (Mitchell and Albright, 1972) Consistent with this emphasis, the dependent variable of studies testing the theory are subordinate motivation and satisfaction. Evans (1970) is given credit for the original framework of the theory but House and his associates have been more closely linked to the

empirical testing of its various components. The theory does much to support the contention that a quality leader should act more as a "facilitator" than a "wielder of power". House and Mitchell state that,

> The initial theoretical work by Evans asserts that leaders will be effective by making rewards available to subordinates and by making these rewards contingent on the subordinate's accomplishment of specific goals. Evans argued that one of the strategic functions of the leader is to clarify for subordinates the kind of behavior that leads to goal accomplishment and valued rewards. This function might be referred to as path clarification. (1974, pp. 364-365)

The works of House (1971) and House and Dessler (1974) were directed to explain the effects of four specific kinds of leader behavior (participative, supportive, instrumental and achievement oriented) under various task conditions. The various leader behaviors were hypothesized to have specific effects on,

1. the satisfaction of subordinates
2. their acceptance of the leader, and
3. their expectations that effort will result in effective performance and that effective performance is the path to rewards. (House and Mitchell, 1974, p. 365)

Briefly, the theory consists of two main propositions.

1. Leader behavior is acceptable and satisfying to subordinates to the extent that they see it as either an immediate source of satisfaction or as being instrumental to future satisfaction,
2. Leader behavior will be motivational (e.g. will increase subordinate effort) to the extent that: a) it makes satisfaction of subordinate needs contingent on effective performance, and b) it complements the environment of subordinates by providing the coaching, guidance support, and rewards which are necessary for effective performance.

These two propositions suggest that the strategic functions of the leader are to enhance subordinates' motivation to perform, their satisfaction with the job and their acceptance of the leader. From

previous research on the expectancy theory of motivation (House et al., 1974) it can be inferred that a leader's strategic functions consist of:

1. recognizing and/or arousing subordinates' needs for outcomes over which the leader has some control
2. increasing personal payoffs to subordinates for work-goal attainment
3. Making the path to those payoffs easier to travel by coaching and direction
4. helping subordinates clarify expectancies
5. reducing frustrating barriers, and
6. increasing the opportunities for personal satisfaction contingent on effective performance

In less formal terms, the motivational functions of a leader include increasing the number and kind of personal payoffs to subordinates for attainment of work-related goals. Additionally, making the paths to these payoffs easier to travel (by clarification), reducing the road blocks and pitfalls, and increasing the opportunities for personal satisfaction en route are also considered to be functions of a leader. The theory is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 Summary of Path-Goal Relationships

Leader Behavior	and	Contingency Factors	Cause	Subordinate Attitudes and Behavior
Directive		Subordinate characteristics:		Job satisfaction:
		Authoritarianism	Personal	Job → Rewards
Supportive		Locus of control	perceptions	Acceptance of leader:
		Ability		Leader → Rewards
Achievement-oriented		Environmental factors:	Motivational	Motivational behavior:
		The task	stimuli	Effort → Performance
Participative		Formal authority system	Constraints	Performance → Rewards
		Primary work group	Rewards	

Source: "Path-Goal Theory of Leadership" by R.J. House and T.R. Mitchell, Journal of Contemporary Business, Volume 5, 1974.

Although not as plentiful as the research on Fiedler's model, there are studies in sport and athletic environments that have tested the path-goal approach. Vos Strache (1978) tested female basketball coaches and their players at the intercollegiate level in an attempt to validate the theory as proposed by House. Her findings showed partial support for certain aspects of the theory in that she concluded that losing coaches may not have clearly identified the path for success for their team members.

The path-goal model has also been tested by Chelladurai and Saleh (1978) using physical education students. With respect to the parts of the study that related to path-goal theory, mixed results were indicated. Using the variability of the sport (open versus closed), the dependence (team versus individual), and sex of the athletes as independent variables, the study involved asking subjects their preference for various leadership styles. The results revealed only partial support for the path-goal theory relating specifically to the task attribute of dependence (Chelladurai and Saleh, 1978).

Vroom and Yetton's Prescriptive Model. This situational model is intended to assist leaders in meeting the two criteria of effective decision solutions suggested by Maier (1960). Specifically,

1. ensure a high quality of solutions to problems that must be dealt with,

2. obtain solutions that are acceptable to subordinates, IF acceptability of solutions is important to the effective implementation of the decision.

The model goes on to describe seven styles of decision-making which are likely to lead to different outcomes under different situations. The styles range from independent problem solving using information available at the time, to a group consensus-seeking

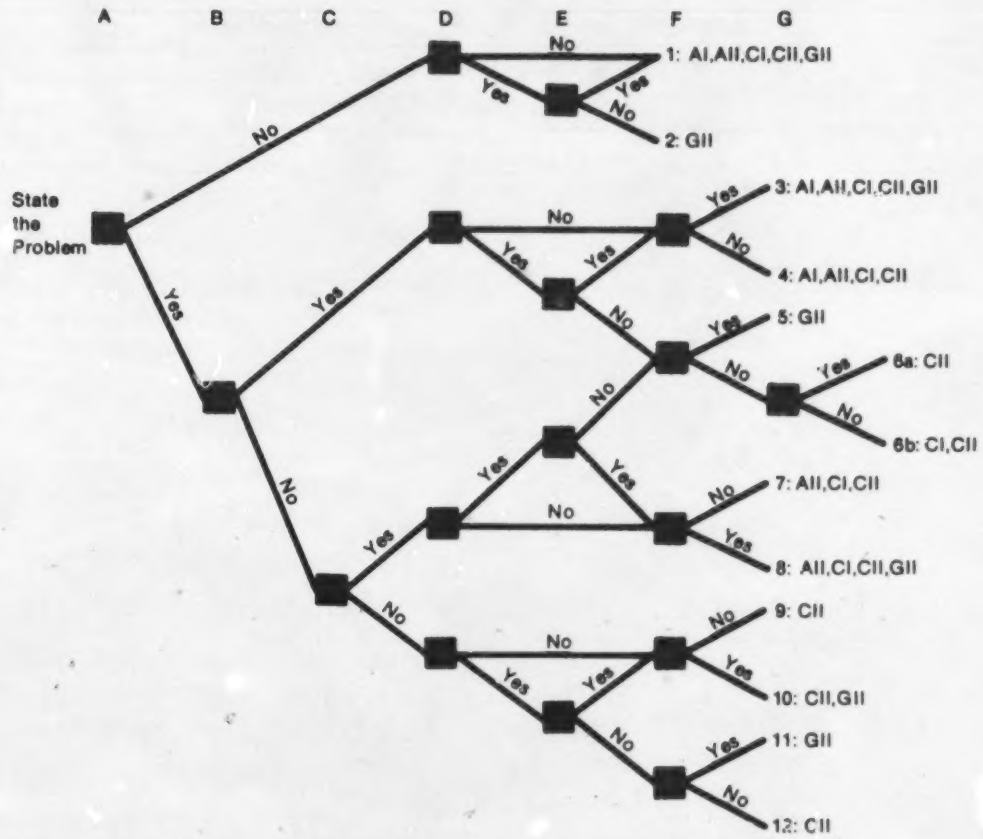
approach. The next feature of the model involves the identification of eight properties of problems that may have relevance to the determination of various methods of decision-making for specific problems. Various combinations of the eight properties result in fourteen problem types. Vroom and Yetton (1973) state that the approach to be taken at this point, is to select the characteristics of the problem to be solved as the determining factor in selecting the appropriate form or amount of participation.

For selecting the most appropriate decision method, a set of eight decision rules have been formulated to act as a guide. The combination of seven styles, eight problem characteristics, fourteen problem types, and eight problem rules constitute the normative or PRESCRIPTIVE model. In essence, the model is designed to assist leaders in deciding how to go about making a decision in a given situation. The model is often presented in the form of a decision tree as depicted in Figure 3.

The originators of the theory present a substantial amount of data concerning the decision-making approaches managers used in various situations and the approaches they would use for hypothetical problems. As the bulk of the data were generated from self reports by managers, and the biases of this form of data gathered has been well established (Bass, 1957; Campbell, 1956; and Graham & Glenco, 1970), this might be considered to be a weakness of the theory.

While the validity of the model remains to be established through sound empirical investigation, it can be assessed in terms of its plausibility and logical consistency. In this lies the root of another criticism of the model. Application of the model according to its prescriptive nature assumes that the choice of decision style can be

Figure 3 Vroom and Yetton's Decision Tree



A. Does the problem possess a quality requirement?
B. Do I have sufficient information to make a high-quality decision?
C. Is the problem structured?
D. Is acceptance of the decision by subordinates important for effective implementation?
E. If I were to make the decision by myself, am I reasonably certain that it would be accepted by my subordinates?
F. Do subordinates share the organizational goals to be attained in solving this problem?
G. Is conflict among subordinates likely in preferred solutions?

Source: Leadership and Decision-Making by Victor H. Vroom and Phillip H. Yetton, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1973.

made deliberately. This may be a faulty assumption in light of the limited amount of time and the varied conditions under which most decisions are made.

Although the Vroom and Yetton model has not been tested extensively in sport and athletic situations, an interesting modification is reported by Chelladurai and Haggerty (1978). By adopting a similar "decision tree" schematic, and replacing the various styles and problem attributes, the model appears to be applicable to coaching situations. The problem attributes viewed as being relevant to an athletic environment were: 1) time pressure, 2) information location, 3) group integration, 4) problem complexity, 5) group acceptance, and 6) power (Chelladurai and Carron, 1978).

Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory. Situational Leadership Theory (SLT), formerly referred to as Life Cycle Theory of Leadership (Hersey and Blanchard, 1969a, 1969b, 1969c), is based on a curvilinear relationship between task behavior, relationship behavior, and the maturity of the followers. The theory attempts to provide leaders with some understanding of the relationship between the level of maturity of the followers and the various leadership styles. The basic postulate of the theory is that leadership style should vary as the situation varies. Thus, there are situations for which a high task/low relationship leadership style would be appropriate and another style would be inappropriate - that is, any style other than the "appropriate" one would result in less than satisfactory outcomes.

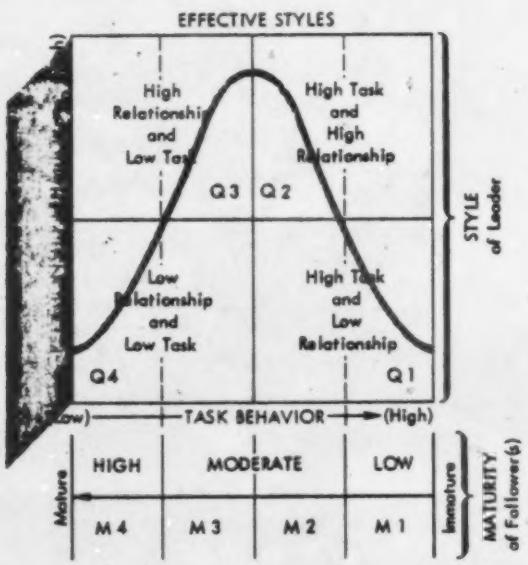
Maturity is defined in SLT as "the capacity to set high but attainable goals, willingness and ability to take responsibility, and education and/or experience of an individual or of a group" (Hersey and Blanchard, 1977, p. 161). It should be noted that the above variables of maturity should be considered only in relation to a specific task to be performed. This consideration of the relative maturity of individual followers to the subsequent degree of effectiveness of their leaders is the unique feature of SLT.

The theory is an outgrowth of the Tri-Dimensional Leader Effectiveness Model that Hersey and Blanchard adapted from the work of William Reddin (1967, 1970). Reddin was the first researcher to add an effectiveness dimension to the task and relationship dimensions of earlier models such as the Managerial Grid (Blake and Mouton, 1964) and the Ohio State Grid (Stogdill and Coons, 1957). With regard to the incorporation of this effectiveness dimension into Situational Leadership Theory, Hersey and Blanchard say:

> If the effectiveness of a leader behavior style depends upon the situation in which it is used, it follows that any of the basic styles may be effective or ineffective depending on the situation. The difference between the effective and ineffective styles is often not the actual behavior of the leader but the appropriateness of this behavior to the environment. It is the interaction of the basic style with the environment that results in a degree of effectiveness or ineffectiveness. (1977, p. 105)

By integrating the Tri-Dimensional Leadership Model and a continuum representing the relative maturity of followers Hersey and Blanchard developed their SLT model that appears in Figure 4.

Figure 4 Situational Leadership Model



Source: Management of Organizational Behavior by P. Hersey and K.H. Blanchard. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1977, p. 167.

The model suggests that for an immature individual or group, high task and low relationship leadership behavior is appropriate. If an individual or group is unproductive, it is posited that providing socioemotional support will tend to reinforce that ineffective behavior. The appropriate leadership style would consist of setting goals, structuring formal channels of communication and providing direction.

At the other end of the continuum are the individuals or groups considered to be mature in task-relevant terms. The model suggests that when an individual or group has the capacity and willingness to take responsibility, is motivated to attain organizational goals, and accomplishes tasks creatively, effectively, and efficiently, the appropriate leader behavior is to leave the individuals alone (low-task and low-relationship style). According to the theory, a mature individual or group will resent task leadership behaviors because they fulfill these functions themselves. Similarly, there is no need for socioemotional rewarding as the mature groups or individuals are intrinsically motivated (Finch, 1976). Appropriate leader behavior for these individuals involves planning for the future, coordinating efforts within the organization and securing more resources for the group.

Hersey and Blanchard also suggest that as an immature group and individual responds to the high task/low relationship leadership style by beginning to work more effectively, it is crucial that the leader reinforce this initiative. Providing praise in addition to extrinsic rewards on the part of the leader, facilitates shift in leadership style to that of high task/high relationship. As the process continues, subordinates should learn to become more proficient in the completion of their assigned tasks. At this juncture, the leader can maintain the

high socioemotional support and decrease the directive types of behaviors thus moving to a high relationship/low task style. Eventually, if the complete "life cycle" comes to fruition, individuals and groups will learn to be self-directing and self-motivating. They will take responsibility and thereby allow the leader to adopt the low task/low relationship approach previously mentioned.

Although the theory and commercial applications of the model are widely used in training and development seminars (Learning Resources Corporation, 1979), several issues surrounding SLT are not completely resolved. First, there is the question of leader flexibility. Most of the previous studies of leadership assume that leader style is largely a function of personality and is relatively stable (Fiedler, 1967). However, there is increasing evidence that behaviors associated with leadership styles can be learned (Finch, 1976; Lyle, 1976; Rinfret-Raynor, 1977; Rosenblum, 1977). These learned behaviors are referred to be Osborn and Hunt (1975) as discretionary influence and are considered to be the essence of leadership. To date, most of the studies testing SLT have operated on the assumption that leaders are able to consciously manipulate style (Smith, 1975; Vos Strache, 1978; Morris, 1978; Beck, 1978).

One of the most serious conceptual weaknesses of SLT is the indirect measurement of leader effectiveness. The term "style adaptability" is used synonymously with effectiveness, with regard to scoring both Hersey and Blanchard' LEAD-SELF (leader's self perceptions) and LEAD-OTHER (subordinate's perception of leader) instruments. The matching of appropriate leadership style with contrived situations indicates the leader has properly "adapted" and is therefore considered to be effective. For a theoretically sound testing of the SLT model,

it is necessary to obtain an independent measure of leadership effectiveness. Such a measure would yield data that reflects the relative effectiveness of a leader and yet is not influenced by the leader's adaptability to the propositions of the theory.

The most serious area of concern related to the empirical testing of SLT is the operationalization of "task-relevant maturity". Even though the variable only refers to an individual's capacity to perform certain tasks and does not refer to that person's overall maturity, this distinction is often difficult for respondents to make (Beck, 1978). Another criticism is articulated by Chelladurai and Carron (1978) who note that the rationale for combining personality which is stable, and ability which is transient, is subject to question.

To date the studies testing the SLT model have returned ambiguous results. Morris (1978) considered teaching styles to be synonymous with leadership styles and found that by manipulating them nursing students increased performance when exposed to the styles suggested by the model. However, Beck (1978), using principals and teachers of elementary schools found inconclusive results that failed to support the propositions of the theory. One of his conclusions was that the Maturity Scale (Hambleton, Blanchard, and Hersey, 1977), used to measure the task-relevant maturity of the teachers was not discriminating enough to provide the necessary levels of the independent variable. Smith (1975) also used principals and teachers of elementary schools for her sample in a doctoral dissertation under Kenneth Blanchard's direction. She operationalized "maturity" by using two independent measures, one of time competence, and the other of inner-directed support or independence. Smith's results showed partial support for the SLT model using reading achievement scores of students as an indirect measure of teacher effectiveness. However, in this particular study

insufficient data in the low task/low relationship leadership quadrant precluded a complete analysis.

In an industrial setting Damico (1976) tested SLT using supervisors and subordinates of intact work units. He found no significant two-way interaction of leader styles in the hypothesized directions, although he noted several instances where there were cases tending toward significance. Damico notes that from the experience of his research the question of how to specify and measure maturity is one which will have to be addressed prior to reliable testing of SLT.

A recent investigation of Gooding (1978) attempted to determine whether there were any significant relationships among the leadership styles of administrative heads of accredited baccalaureat nursing programs and various organizational variables. One of the variables was defined as group maturity. Gooding found that leadership styles were independent of the organizational variables that were tested. These findings might be explained by the operationalization of maturity as a group (and therefore averaged) measure.

The most recent study involving a validation of the SLT model is that of Goldenberg (1980). She surveyed 35 heads of Ontario College diploma nursing programs and their faculty members. Although the results were consistent with the theory Goldenberg recommended further validation of the instruments that have been developed by Hersey and Blanchard.

Three additional studies that make use of SLT without specifically testing its components are Lyle (1976), Rinfret-Raynor (1977), and Rosenblum (1977). Lyle used SLT and integrated it with a ten-step plannnng process for educational institutions. The resultant conceptual

framework was designed to improve the management effectiveness of educational leaders. Rinfret-Raynor and Rosenblum both focused on the effects of training leaders using the SLT approach.

Referring to research that has been conducted in sport and athletic environments, the results are equally confusing. Vos Strache (1978), in an investigation of the relationship of ideal and actual leader behaviors and team performance outcome, skill level and class level, failed to support the SLT theory. Using the class level and starting status of female intercollegiate basketball players as indicators of relative maturity, Vos Strache concluded that these measures did not represent a range broad enough to allow for differentiation in maturity.

Using intramural/recreational sport directors and their staff members Boucher (1980), tested the theory with 174 leader/follower dyads. Three unique instruments were piloted and validated for the study and the methodological problems identified by Beck (1978) were minimized by a re-conceptualizing of task-relevant maturity. The results of the study supported three of the four relationships depicted in the SLT leadership quadrants. In two studies in 1980 using coaches and players the tenants of the Hersey and Blanchard's theory. McMillan (1980) tested 115 player/coach dyads from high school football teams and found no significant results. Case (1980) used basketball coaches and their players from four different levels (junior high to A.A.U.) and his results also failed to generate any support for the model.

In an attempt to reconcile the propositions of SLT to the athletic context, Chelladurai and Carron (1978), propose transposing the two axes of the Hersey and Blanchard model. Specifically, the revision retains "the curvilinear relationship between leadership style and

subordinate maturity but the ordered pattern represented in each of the four quadrants is changed" (Chelladurai and Carron, 1978, p. 43). The modification is based on the assumption that the "maturity" of players will increase from the elementary school level through the professional sport level and therefore leadership style of coaches should adapt accordingly. If however, players might be considered to go through the "rookie to veteran" cycle at each of these levels, the logical consistency of the model is affected. A study by Case (1980), cited previously in this paper provides the only support to date for the modified model. Using basketball players and coaches from four levels of competition Case reported results that partially supported the Chelladurai and Carron modification and failed to support the original model.

Leadership: Where Else Can We Go?

Recently, a book with the above title (McCall and Lombardo, 1978), summarized the results of a conference at the Center for Creative Leadership, Greensboro, North Carolina. The major theme of the conference was the assertation that social and behavioral scientists need to rediscover the phenomenon of leadership. The pursuit of research, rigor and precision has led to an overemphasis on techniques at the expense of knowing what is going on in a direct human way. "As a result, there are masses of findings that on one seems able to pull together - they simply float around in the literature, providing nothing from which one can push off to anywhere" (McCall and Lombardo, 1978, p. xii). Much of the discussion at this conference had to do with ways in which people might study leadership and get results that make better contact with the problems and challenges faced by real leaders and managers.

The conference was indeed timely as researchers have been showing signs of frustration with the direction in which leadership studies are going. McCall and Lombardo point out that any serious student of leadership should, after a period of time, discover three things:

1. the number of unintegrated models, theories, prescriptions and conceptual schemes that is truly mind-boggling;
2. much of the literature is fragmentary, trivial, unrealistic or dull;
3. the research results are characterized by Type III errors (solving the wrong problem precisely) and by contradictions. (1978, p. 3)

It appears that the state of the art in sport leadership research has arrived at a similar crossroad. If future theory development in leadership is to be fruitful and truly representative of this social process, at least two omissions must be given attention. The first is to avoid the short-range micro approach to studying the phenomenon. Studies have been traditionally atomistic, focusing on leader group relations while disregarding the total social system relationships. This observation is supported by Chelladurai (1980), who notes that there is a need to view leadership as one of the many subsystems of the total organizational system. Contrary to the reductionist view of leadership, this type of approach considers sport leaders and their groups as embedded in complex, often contradictory organizational systems, and examines them in this context. In this regard Chelladurai's (1978) recent generation of a multidimensional model of sport leadership holds true promise. The author has attempted to integrate the major aspects of the path-goal approach (House), adaptive/reactive theory (Osborn and Hunt), and the discrepancy model (Yukl), into a comprehensive framework suitable for athletic situations.

Although the various linkages of the model are not fully tested in a variety of sport environments, the model is logically consistent and has intuitive appeal.

The second ommission has to do with the plethora of studies describing what leaders and their subordinates say they do, could do or should do. If knowledge of the behavioral sciences is to be translated into usable guidelines for leaders in sport and athletic environments, observational studies must complement the controlled conditions of the laboratory experiments.

With respect to the direction that research in sport leadership should take, an earlier comment by Cratty appears to be most appropriate.

> It is becoming increasingly apparent to social scientists that a search for factors that mold directors and make leaders effective will be likely to terminate in a complex theoretical model. This model should take into account the nature of the group, its structure, the kind of task facing the group, the signs of power that accompany the group, and the quality and quantity of the interactions between leader and follower.
>
> (1973, p. 229)

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